TYCI

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INTERVIEW KRISTIN HERSH

Melody Lau speaks with Kristin Hersh, author, singer-songwriter and leader of alt-rock heroes Throwing Muses.

Purgatory/Paradise is the first album from Throwing Muses in over a decade. When and how did you get together and decide to record new material?

We have continued working throughout this decade, but had no interest in engaging in the recording industry, which we have found relies more on style than on substance, more on marketing than the work itself. To the point where a record company will actually ask a band to dumb down their product. Becoming listener-supported through cash music, a non-profit I started with friends eight years ago, allowed us to release music exactly as it should sound, without an ear toward marketability. In fact, if we presented our listeners with a marketable product, I believe it would be rejected...

What was that first time back in the studio like? How has the work process evolved throughout the years?

We have continued to record, just haven't released anything until now. Seeing my bandmates show up in the studio has always been like coming home.

Does the band draw from the same influences now as they did back when you first started making music?

We've never been a me to draw on influences. For better or for worse, we've always sounded like ourselves.

There are 32 tracks on this new album, how many did you end up writing and how did you whittle down the list?

Started with about 75, recorded 50, about 35 felt realized. then we began sequencing the pieces that work together, which helped us determine which tracks were adding something and which ones were getting in the way.

A book also accompanies the album, why did you decide to create a book to go with it?

I had good success doing that with my last release, Crooked, and felt that Purgatory/Paradise would be best served by filling in some of the blanks left by the music. Prose and images compliment rather than explain, but they do help to complete a picture.

You're both an author and a songwriter so is there a different process behind both or are they similar to do? And how was it to compile the two for the Purgatory/ Paradise book?

Songs appear on their own, in their own voice. Writing comes to me as conversation does.

You also have a solo career - do you plan on releasing any new music as a solo artist?

I have two solo records waiting to be mixed right now, one called Spark Meet Gasoline, the other as yet unnamed. I've been putting a track a month (with an extra hidden track for Strange Angel CASH music subscribers) up at my website all year long.

Having been in the music scene for so long, what do you think is the key to longevity in music nowadays? How do you continue to stay motivated and inspired?

All you can do is play music that doesn't suck. Even if it's just for the sky. Otherwise, there's no point.

Do you have any particular advice for women in music?

Women and men are the same. And none of us should suck...

Are there any other projects in the works for the future?

I have a finished 50FootWave record ready to be released when the Muses record has run its course, as well as these two solos. I'm writing three. Oops at once, hoping some doesn't suck. I'll finish *that* one.

FOR MORE ON KRISTIN'S MUSIC, VISIT KRISTINHERSH.COM. FOR MORE OF MELODY'S WRITING, CHECK OUT STATICZINE.COM.

THROWING MUSES photo: Andrew Catlin

SHE WAS A SK8ER GRRRL

Nicky Carder writes about skateboarding and the recent documentaries on the rise of female skateboarders across the globe.

As someone who has become known as 'the lady who skateboards to work', I can barely contain my excitement when I hear that skateboarding and longboarding has been used as a tool to promote gender equality. It is no secret that women have been defining social spaces, stereotypically hoarded by men, for some years now. However, the daily taunts and applauds received by female boarders on our streets still suggests that skateboarding is something that continues to be considered unusual by society. Furthermore, female prominence in western skating sub-cultures is one thing, but recent female targeted skateboarding campaigns such as Skateistan in Cambodia, Longboard Istanbul events and the Longboard Girls Crew documentaries, have proven to be incredibly liberating for women from all walks of life, with many using it to break, if only momentarily, from a life shrouded by oppression.

Many people here in Scotland, question my environmentally-friendly and affordable method of transport. I always explain my passion for the activity and insist I get just as much from it now as I did when I laid eyes on my very first Star Wars skateboard at age 8, and when I contently nailed myself dropping into my first half-pipe at age 10. Although I don't have the same skills as the inspirational Longboard Girls Crew hailing from Spain, I do crave the brief escapism skateboarding brings while riding at 20 mph to the office with the Savages album blaring in my ears.

Open is the new film produced for the Longboard Girls Crew, an international longboarding community of girls who are sick of gender labelling and sick of girl riders being reluctant to take up the sport due to discrimination and stereotyping. Together, the Longboard Girls Crew has formed a collective of passionate riders, creating a global platform to encourage women from all backgrounds to take up the sport. Since its birth three years ago, Longboard Girls Crew have racked up over 150,000 Facebook followers and have had over 8 million views on their seven promotional Youtube videos; including the previous film, Endless Roads which documented a longboarding journey across Spain.

Open is due to be released sometime during December this year. The feature length film will document the travels of 14 Longboard Girls Crew members as they explore the turbulent landscapes of Israel, with the aim of providing a unique insight into this war stricken country, detached from the propaganda plaguing our TV sets and instead focusing on the diverse trails the longboarders have carved into its surroundings. The film will feature members of the Israeli longboard community, promote longboarding for peace and capture the momentum of the female scene within an international skating environment.

Despite the fact I have not personally been on one of these life-changing trips across the Middle East, I definitely feel a sense of belonging to the female skating community, and take inspiration from the work other female skaters have documented. I love to encourage new female boarders, if not only for the sheer enjoyment of the activity, but to support women in their choice of past time, regardless of the stereotyping. I admire their abilities to transcend the "skating is cool" trends, to disregard the isolation of being the token female and to jump past the sceptics who are judgemental of what tricks each girl can do - when the truth is nothing else matters as long as we enjoy the ride. Let the haters hate and the critics criticise, for they may be blissfully unaware that the 5 year old girl, who often invisibly wheels around Kelvin Grove Skate Park on her Barbie tricycle, may, in all likeliness, one day beat most of them in a skate off, and champion the next generation of women to take to the park.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT LONGBOARDGIRLSCREW.COM AND SKATISTAN.ORG.

Ladysounds

Ladysounds is a brand new feature on the TYCI social media networks. Every Monday, we post a picture pertaining to a theme and ask you to send us suggestions of songs by female bands and musicians to go in a playlist to do with that topic. Every Sunday, we share 15 of the best tunes on 8tracks.

Send your track suggestions to contact.tyci@gmail.com or hit us up on facebook.com/tyciblog, Twitter (@tyciblog) and Instagram (@tyciblog).

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: KOTRYNA ULA KILIULYTE

Amanda Aitken writes about Lithuanian photographer Kotryna Ula Kiliulyte about her recent exhibition at Street Level Photoworks.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Kotryna Ula Kiliulyte is a photographer from Lithuania currently living in Glasgow. She studied at Vilnius Art Academy and Glasgow School of Art from which she graduated with first class honours in photography. Since then she has been making her own work, taking commissions and even shooting an occasional wedding. In 2011 she was awarded the Glasgow Visual Artist Award to complete her photographic series Homo Faber about Scottish makers and the craft scene. This year she was selected to take part in the Young Photographers Alliance Mentoring Programme and spent the summer developing the project further. Kotryna also got shortlisted for IdeasTap's Magnum Photographic Award…

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE PROJECT AND HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED?

The project is called Away Home. The YPA mentoring programme has been running for a few years now and I heard about it through my colleague and dear friend Sarah Amy Fishlock who took part in it last year. It is a great opportunity for photographers to get involved in local photographic circles, get weekly mentoring from industry professionals and develop a project with their support. This year's theme was 'escape'.

WHAT WAS YOUR INTERPRETATION OF THE THEME?

I was thinking about food and the way we eat for a long time. Being a foreigner in Scotland, I found myself cooking up Lithuanian or Polish feasts (my dear grandma is Polish) for my friends, shopping in local Eastern European shops and getting excited when I find

some very average Lithuanian lager for sale at Wetherspoons. I then spoke to other people, who moved away from their home countries and realised there is a common topic for us - nostalgia related to home food... And being far away, living very different life, they tend to escape back home through a plateful of nostalgia.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE?

I am still working on this project trying to expand the list of nationalities that take part in it and tweaking the visual language a bit. I don't think I will ever get bored of this - food and home are the core of my identity, and hopefully this applies to many people who will find this project interesting.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. TO SEE MORE OF KOTRYNA'S WORK, HEAD TO KOTRYNAULA.COM.

WHY I HEART: MARINA AND THE DIAMONDS

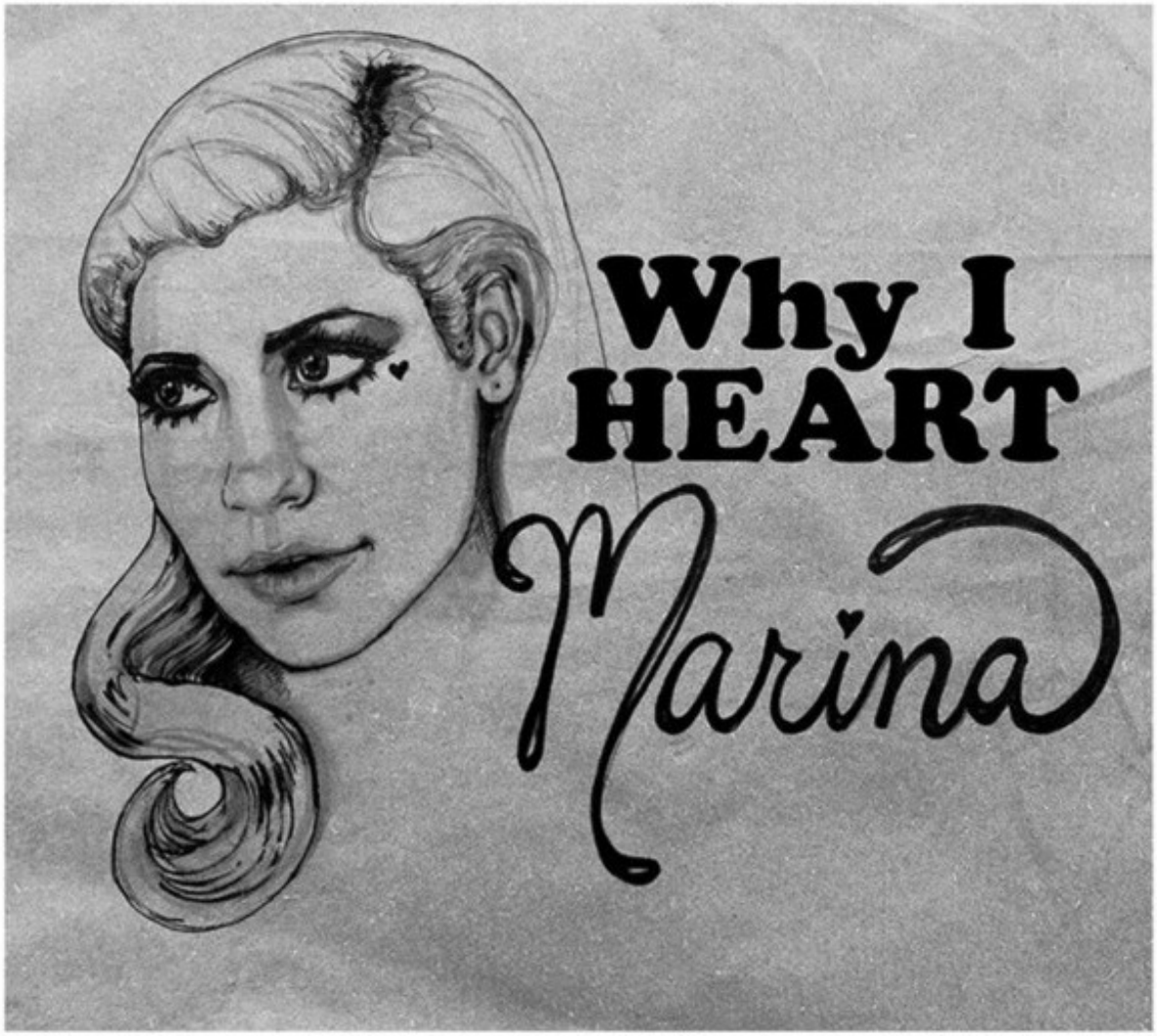
New TYCI contributor Gretchen King explains her love for musician Marina Diamandis.

A couple of years ago whilst working at a library, I stumbled upon the first full-length release of Marina Diamandis, better known by her stage name of Marina and the Diamonds. I was processing the library's lending out of her debut album, The Family Jewels, which was reserved with a bunch of other albums that I already liked. Trusting this stranger's taste in music, I put my name on the bottom of the library's reserve list for her CD, and sent it on it's way. After a few weeks the CD made it's way through the other names on the reserve list, and back into my hands.

At first listen, I found myself playing the 'who does she sound like?' game. This game makes me cringe, especially when I hear the stereotypical: 'She's a female singer so she sounds like [insert popular girl singer here - typically one that holds no relevance other than looks alone]'. However, I couldn't shake the desire to play the game myself and so I was left with an opinion that went something like: 'A vocal cocktail of Regina Spektor, Kate Bush and Shakira' (of which ALL have been known to sport brown hair… am I falling into my own trap?!?). No matter how much she reminded me of these singers, the voice I heard was purely Marina. Immersed in her visual and thought provoking lyrics that were grounded in a pop familiarity, I instantly fell for her songs. Her words felt raw, honest, and brave. They contained truths and emotions that are often perceived as weakness in the public eye. Who really wants to admit to the world that they are the jealous type who feels rejected? Or the control freak driven by a greed to succeed? You know those emotions: the ones that we keep to ourselves while wondering if today's pop queens actually feel anything under their perfectly coifed extensions.

I was elated at my Marina discovery and I wanted to share it with my (then) boyfriend - a musician himself. Already familiar with her, he snarled in disdain. He expressed how much he and the female vocalist of his band couldn't stand her. Their reasoning, he explained, was that she was desperately 'fame hungry'. While I was caught off guard by their disapproval (based on our shared love of many other acts and an appreciation for strong female musicians), I was not surprised about the 'fame hungry' comment.

Marina had expressed that she was indeed 'fame hungry' in her interviews and lyrics, which is more than a lot of other people in her position have been known to do. Being her authentic self and speaking her mind meant a lot more to me than having a desperate desire for fame. I found her frankness admirable and refreshing. I also found my ex's comment ironic as I thought to myself, 'That's odd. You and your



singer seem quite 'fame hungry' yourselves… You are just very secretive about it.'

The dialogue with my ex-boyfriend firmly planted my belief that honesty and authenticity are high on my values list. And that artists who speak from their heart are extremely important in the vapidness of today's pop world.

Now having said that, I should humbly admit that I too have been a desperate fame monger at times. And have also been known to love a vapid pop song or two. Or fifty. But pop does not have to be vapid. Nor does it have to play by anyone else's rules. And these are the reasons that I heart Marina: she still plays by her own rules while exploring the pop formula. And she calls it like she sees it. A great example being last year: after a delay in the release of her How To Be a Heartbreaker music video, she blasted on Twitter:

'So, someone at my record label wont let me release the video bc I look ugly in it apparently + we need more $ / time to paint out ugly parts.' She added, 'The video will be out end of the week. If not, I am happy to leak the 'minger' [slang for "ugly person"] version for my fans.'

While it makes me bummed that this is still the state of our music and entertainment industry, I was thrilled that Marina didn't just roll over and take it. She took a stand and let her fans in on the true nature of the video's delay… A video that incorporates a blatant role reversal of gender objectification with nearly 14 million views to date. Not bad for a 'minger'!??

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK.

INTERVIEW: GLASGOW ROLLER DERBY

Lauren Mayberry speaks to Grace Maclean from Glasgow Roller Derby to learn more about the sport and how people can get involved with the club.

FOR ANYONE WHO DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT GLASGOW ROLLER DERBY YET, COULD YOU TELL US WHAT IT IS?

Roller derby is a full contact sport played on quad roller skates. Glasgow Roller Derby is a league of women (and some men) who work towards the promotion of roller derby within our community and to grow our travel teams as well as the wealth of talent within our league. We currently have around 70 members, two established competitive travel teams who play nationally and internationally, 4 home teams which play each other in an internal 'league' throughout the year. The league is run by volunteers, with each member performing at least one committee role, ensuring the efficient running of the club and that everyone plays their part in upholding the DIY ethos of the club and our sport. We are a large and continually growing grassroots run organisation that promotes a strong and healthy image of women from all walks of life, of all shapes and sizes. We embrace diversity and celebrate inclusion while working hard towards bettering ourselves as players and our league as a whole…

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AT GRD?

I am currently the Head of the PR Committee, a trainee coach, skater in the all-star travel team the Irn Bruisers and co-captain of

my home team the Bad Omens…

HOW AND WHEN DID YOU GET INTO DERBY IN THE FIRST PLACE?

My friend at work watched the Drew Barrymore directed movie Whip It. This movie is about the birth of roller derby is Austin, Texas and got her very interested in the sport. She asked me to come along to the Glasgow Roller Derby recruits sessions with her as I have always been an athletic person who was open to most sports. Unfortunately she couldn't make the training sessions but I went along anyway and became instantly hooked and eventually obsessed! It's the best thing I have ever done in my life and I'm really grateful to her for getting me involved.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE THING ABOUT DERBY AND WHY WOULD YOU RECOMMEND IT TO OTHER GIRLS?

Roller derby is anything and everything you could ever want from a sport. It is fast paced, exciting, intense, complicated, tough, exhausting but so very rewarding and fun. GRD puts you through a four month comprehensive skating skills course before you can progress towards league training so by joining roller derby you can learn a whole new skill set in a supportive, positive and friendly environment. You will join and make a world of friends and find yourself within a fantastic community of strong, independent and very different women and men who you may not otherwise have ever come into contact with...

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST DERBY NAMES IN THE TEAM? HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT SELECTING THE PERFECT DERBY NAME?

We traditionally don't have league members choose their derby name until they have completed their basic skills training and join the main league. This makes taking in a derby name more of a graduation process and it's always interesting and hilarious to find out what people come up with. Your derby name can be anything you want it to be. My name is Mona Rampage and I like it as in normal life I can just be myself but once I'm on track I am on a rampage! My favourites within GRD are Haberbashery who is someone who loves making clothes, jewellery, knitting, sewing and is just generally crafty. I think her name suits her perfectly. Slain Austen is training to be a librarian and loves Jane Austen. TerrorByte works with computers. And Hardcore Prawn, because it's just hilarious!

IF ANYONE WANTED TO GET INVOLVED WITH GRD, HOW WOULD THEY GO ABOUT IT?

We take in skaters every 6 months so if you want to join email recruiting@glasgowrollerderby.com to get added to the waiting list for the next intake. Our head of recruits training will then email you all of the necessary information about joining and our rules. Feel free to private message our Facebook page if you have any further questions or queries.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON GRD, HEAD TO GLASGOWROLLERDERBY.COM.

TYCI XMAS PARTY

SATURDAY 21 DEC 11PM-3AM

SWG3
100 EASTVALE PLACE, GLASGOW
10 POUNDS + BOOKING FEE

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM THE LIVE EVENTS PAGE ON TYCI.ORG.UK

TYCI will be back at Bloc (117 Bath Street, Glasgow) on Saturday 18 January 2014.

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The latest episode of the TYCI podcast is online now and can be found at soundcloud.com/tyciblog. Our next Subcity show will be Thursday 5 December, 5 - 7pm. Tune in at subcity.org/shows/tyci.

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TYCI is a collective run by women.
We have a website where we write about things which affect us and put together features on art, theatre, music, film, politics, current affairs and most things in between. We also talk about similar stuff on our monthly radio show on Subcity.

This zine is a collection of some of the content from our site and is distributed in conjunction with our monthly live event at Bloc.

If you would like to get involved, reply to any of our articles or just generally say hi, hit us up on contact.tyci@gmail.com or visit tyci.org.uk.

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